



CASCADIA

RUCK CLUB

Cascadia Ruck Club: A Guide to
Rucking for Comrades!

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FEEL FREE TO USE THE IMAGE
ABOVE AND MAKE A FLAG PATCH
(2x3 inches with a velcro backing) OR
OTHER TYPE OF GRAPHIC FOR
YOUR COOL PATCH COLLECTIONS
OR WEAR ON YOUR GEAR WHEN

YOU RUCK!

What is Rucking?

Rucking is a strange term many are not familiar with, unless you were in the military, some form of state security organization or first responder organization. The history of rucking dates back to the first use of the backpack as a tool in the arsenal of the soldiers within standing armies who needed to travel long distances and hold the gear needed to survive and complete their mission on their back. Training would include bootcamps in which recruits or combatants would 'ruck' or march together for extended periods of time to condition their bodies and minds for the endurance required for dangerous and hostile environments. Rucking generally trains the body to be able to move supplies or gear from a starting point to an ending point.

To this day rucking is used both in the civilian and everyday person world for fitness as well as militaries and first responder organizations worldwide that use the training to build their capacity to survive and carry out their respective organizations missions. Throughout time as well, backpacks have developed and backpack technology has changed based upon the experiences of the users of the packs. Backpacks for rucking normally involve a regular backpack with only two straps, an extended backpack with a waist belt built into it, and either no frame, an internal frame, or an external frame backpack built to carry heavier loads.

How Easy is It?

But first let's break down how easy rucking is. It is as simple as putting on a backpack you have, putting some weight in it, and walking in a direction. Hikers could be considered Ruckers as well, with a different goal in mind. The health benefits of rucking are huge. As a person rucks, they increase overall muscle mass, strengthen their posture and back muscles, lose weight and shed pounds just by walking with a weighted pack, and increase their endurance and self-discipline and mental ability to endure tougher conditions in the natural or urban environment.

Rucking as an activity for your team or comrades gives great benefits with a simple activity. Put on a backpack with weight and walk or hike a distance. With rucking you and your comrades can build strength together over time and practice moving with your gear or emergency bag. You will improve your endurance and physical and mental capacity to stay aware in the natural environment and it's a low impact exercise that's easily accessible for everyone around you. Most of all, it's a huge benefit to challenge and build discipline, camaraderie, and trust for your group, team, community, or just yourself! Lastly, it's a great way to get out of the house and get into nature!

Why 'Cascadia Ruck'?

Why 'Cascadia Ruck' though? As a symbol, the concept is basically to get you and your comrades out, gear in your packs, and start rucking! Get together weekly or monthly, learn how to work together on extended rucks and hike, and build strength and endurance as you build a sense of trust and solidarity with each other. No need for fancy gear or expensive toys, just a backpack, some weight, and the courage to work together and get out. Did I forget to say, it's a great way to get out of the house and go chill with some comrades? Rather than the A-cafe where we sit around and chat theory, how about we ruck and chat theory?

Aside from that, 'Cascadia Ruck' is a proactive engagement in bioregionalism. 'Cascadia Ruck' is a symbol, a patch, or a sticker you can have on your gear as you go out and ruck with your friends and comrades!



Source:

https://hawarnews.com/en/uploads/images/202108/063833_192341_malbt-sehidan.jpg

How to get started:

- 1. Get a pack:** Choosing a pack can be complicated, but sometimes the best thing you can do is just find one and get going. You will learn as you ruck more and you discover what works and what doesn't for you. There are many kinds of rucksacks and backpacks to choose from. Go to your local camping store, review products online, or get your jansport out and start exploring how to use it properly such as how tight your backpack straps should be, where to put weight in the pack, etc.



Source:

<https://warriorpublications.wordpress.com/2017/05/08/the-operational-pack/>

2. Choose the right weight: Finding the right weight is pretty simple to do. Start light with a few pounds, or perhaps ten and move up from there. Ensure you pack the weight right. Weights can be everything from light dumbbells and blankets to elevate it into the pack, bricks from your backyard, to specific sand pills that are essentially ziploc bags or garbage bags with specific weights in them (using play sand or dirt) and duct taped closed to prevent the sand from getting out. Explore more on bricks and sand pills as cheap options instead of paying for expensive proprietary weights.



Source:

https://d1ldvf68ux039x.cloudfront.net/thumbs/photos/2006/6241265/1000w_q95.jpg

3. Choose the right shoes: Choosing the right shoes depends on what you like to wear. Obviously wearing high heels or TUK 2 inch platforms is terrible for hiking. You can look for shoes at thrift stores, use combat boots or hiking shoes that are found at military surplus and outdoor stores, or even use sneakers or tennis shoes (A great idea for building foot strength as well is using vans or converse, or finding a barefoot shoe or boot). Note that if you buy a new shoe or boot, there will be a required break in period for the material potentially, so be prepared for blisters if this is the case. Ask around for information on the best shoe or boot you would like to wear for rucking. You can even ruck in outdoor sandals if you're up to it.



Source:

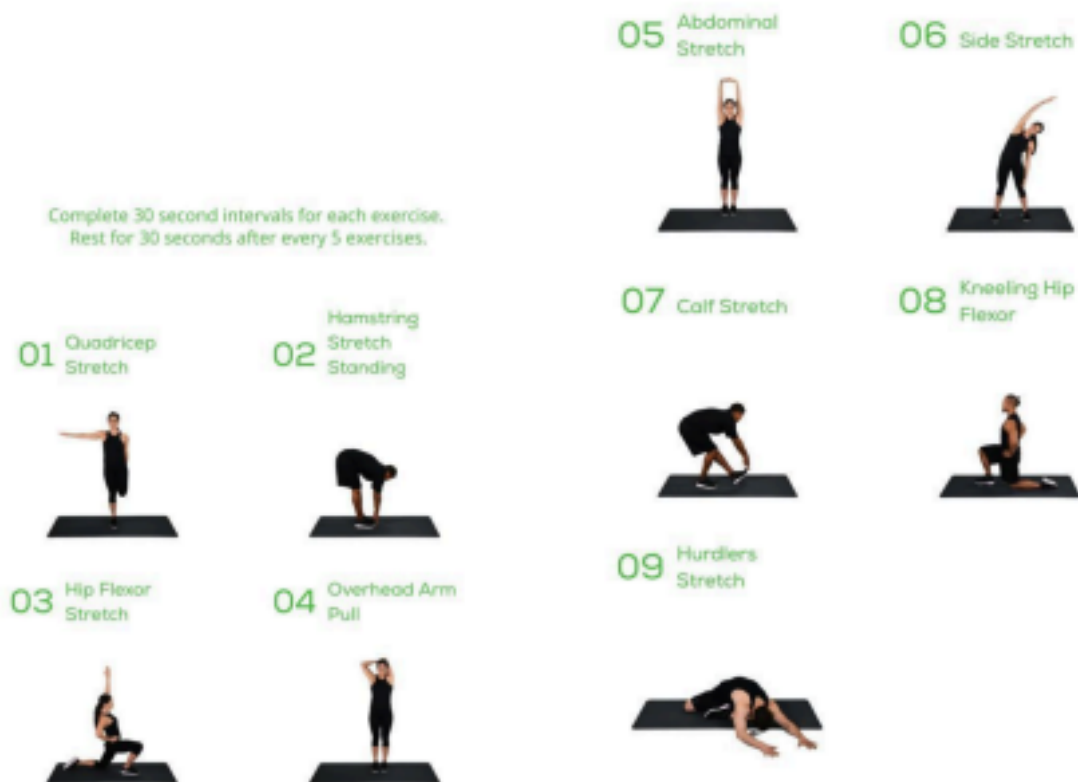
<https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/55fc413fe4b051db9c8fd36a/1596913784184-VBAFVFP02EE27FTDNUQF/best-minimalist-boots.jpg>

Take care of your feet!:

<https://bootcampmilitaryfitnessinstitute.com/injury/foot-care-overview/>

4. Warm up and stretch before beginning: You will want to stretch and get your body warmed up before rucking. This is to prepare and get the body ready for a more intense exercise, increase your range of flexibility and avoid potential injuries from a body that is stiff and not ready to physically exert itself.

(Below is a stretch routine for hiking - example)



Source:

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/fa/2f/31/fa2f316eee78e1985a1e5ea9f762dae3.jpg>

5. Start easy and build up: When you are first rucking, many folks want to get going with the largest weight in order to prove something. First, that's just bad for the body and isn't worth the hassle. Second, it's better to start out small with something new, get used to it, and build your body up over time. Do it together as a group and support each other while keeping each other in check to avoid the ego games that accompany western

fitness culture.

6. Listen to your body and commit to self-care: Your body will tell you what it can and can't do. Listen to your body. If your shoulders seem too sore, or you seem sluggish because of not drinking enough water or being exposed to the elements. Ensure you pack and prepare for the adequate needs your body would require to stay in the ruck, especially with your team. The last thing your team or friends need is a comrade who isn't staying aware of their body, and putting everyone else at risk because they aren't monitoring what they can or can't do. Stay in the game, maintain self-care routines for your ruck and workouts, and ensure you have the adequate supplies needed to hit the trail whether urban or in nature.



Source:

<https://www.thenation.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/FULLER-Roden-CW.jpg>

7. Incorporate rucking into your weekly workouts: This is a great way to bring your workouts outside and engage the potential monotony of the gym. Of course, we all have schedules, but what a great and easy way to get outside and see something new! Spice up your workout by getting out with your comrades and ruck once a week together at a park or some new place in town!

8. Drink water: Of course, all workouts require you to drink water. The standard is 2 liters of water per day per person. Hotter and drier climates means you may have to

pack more water. Make sure to drink enough water prior to your workout so that your ruck is sustained and your body and mind are adequately hydrated. Dehydration can sneak up on you and your comrades. Ensure that you also bring enough water for your ruck, and account for it in the weight of your pack.

Remember with water, you'll have less weight as you drink water, so your rucksack will be lighter. If on extended rucks, ensure you have resupply points or caches along your trail so that you and your comrades can stay hydrated as you move. Sometimes breaking up your water supply to be cached on a trail, can ensure you can keep going. A great way to do this is to go ahead of your trail and stash 1 gallon jugs of water hidden so that when you reach a point on the trail with water, you can refill rather than having to hold 5 gallons of water on you. But of course, most of us will ruck in a park for about an hour a week or a few times a week, a canteen of water would be more than enough given we have adequate hydration before hand.



Cache water on the trail as you ruck! 💎💎

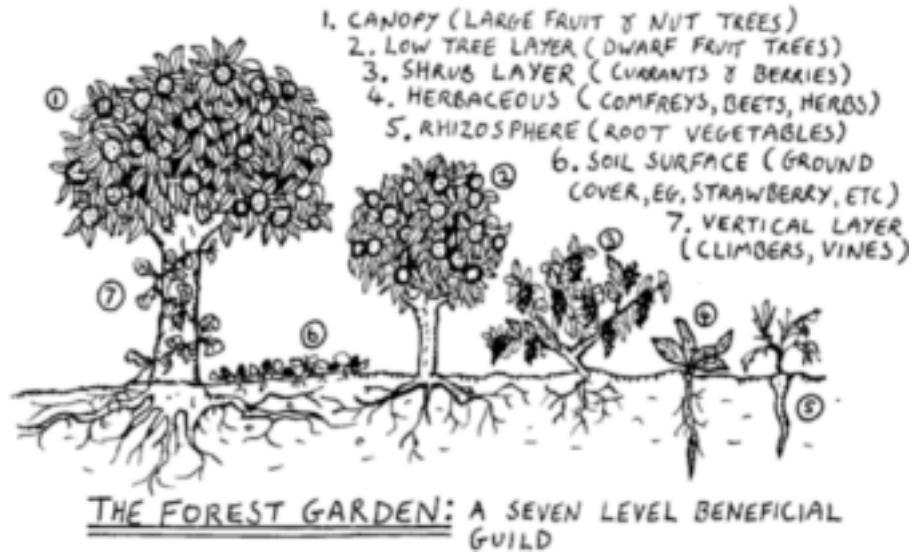
Source: <https://tombraders.net/stella/walks/TR11walk/screenshots/hidden-city-1017.jpg>

Further study for caching water and other supplies for hiking and emergencies:

<https://www.militarynewbie.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/TC-31-29-Special-Forces-Caching-Techniques.pdf>

9. Follow your own pace as you grow: As you grow in your strength, endurance, courage and discipline with rucking, ensure you are going at an adequate pace. Log your workouts as you complete each one in a training journal. If you're with a group, ensure that everyone can keep pace together. On a trail ensure that you don't leave friends and comrades behind, you should only go as fast as your slowest rucker. Put them in the front if you're rucking to keep a decent pace so everyone can workout and stay together.

There is no shame in being where you are at, we are all building up together.



Source: https://www.crcresearch.org/sites/default/files/u11276/512px-forgard2-003_1.gif

10. Get a bunch of comrades to go with you: Of course this speaks for itself. Industrial civilization is built on isolation and destruction of communities and the natural world. We can ruck together in teams or groups, as a community, and get out into the real world, off our computers, and with our packs and any neat gear we feel like rucking around with. Hang out with your comrades, ruck together, show off your gear and share the knowledge of use, get fit together, and have some decent intellectual conversations!



Source: <https://loeidelaphotographie.com/en/maryam-ashrafi-living-with-dv/>

How To Pack A Rucksack:

It is important to remember that when packing for a ruck, we distribute weight properly in the pack to maximize the use of the body and distribute the weight evenly to

avoid exhaustion and potential injury. The lighter elements of the pack will go on the bottom, the medium weighted objects are packed on the lower portion of the back pack near your lower back, and the heaviest gear goes on top near your shoulders. Externally light clothing should go on the outside of this. For just using weights, you can use towels or blankets to elevate the weight in the pack toward the upper part of your back. The graphic below does a great job of explaining this:



Put things that you may need to access quickly at the top of your bag (e.g. head torch and waterproof) so they are easily accessible

Put heavy things (e.g. food and stoves) close to your body, if they are too far away you will not only topple over, but you can also damage your back if you're walking long distances

Put light weight things away from your body (for the same reason as above)

Put medium weight things (e.g. clothes) near the bottom of your bag so that you keep your centre of mass low and don't fall over, these things also won't need to be accessed on-the-go

Most bags have a separate compartment for sleeping bags

Source:

<https://i0.wp.com/sixsummitschallenge.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Rucksack-Guide.jpg?resize=640%2C448&ssl=1>

Ruck Progressive Plan

Beginner Phase (Duration: 2 to 6 months, up to a year for some)

- Frequency: 1 to 2 times a week
- Focus on form: Shoulders back and down, chest out, lean slightly forward at the hips, core engaged

- Pace: Fast walking, ensuring one foot is always on the ground
- Weight: Start with 15 to 25 pounds. Max 30 pounds for fitter individuals
- Terrain: Start with flat, smooth surfaces
- Goal: 4 miles with max weight in less than an hour (15-minute mile standard)

Intermediate Phase (Duration: 2 to 6 months)

- Frequency: 1 to 3 times a week
- Mileage: Max 8 miles
- Weight: Max 40 pounds
- Start implementing variables: Different terrains, adding elevation (hills, stairs), adjusting speed
- Goal: 8 miles with max weight in less than 2 hours, regardless of variables

Advanced Phase

- Frequency: Max 3 times a week
- Mileage: 12 miles and beyond, with a total weekly mileage not exceeding 25 miles
- Weight: 40 pounds and beyond
- Focus on manipulating multiple variables: Weight, elevation, speed, and possibly interval runs
- Include deload or rest weeks for recovery
- Goal: 12 miles in under 3 hours, regardless of variables. For an extreme challenge, attempt 25 miles in 8 hours.



ARE
YOU
READY?